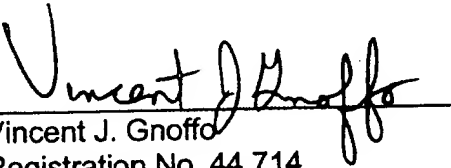Changes to the claims are shown in the attached Appendix A ("VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE") with additions underlined and deletions in brackets. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at (312) 321-4224 if there are any outstanding issues that could be resolved through a telephone conference.

Respectfully submitted,

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In the Claims

29. **(Thrice Amended)** A metering apparatus, said metering apparatus measuring the delivery of electrical energy from an energy supplier to a consumer through a first electric circuit, said metering apparatus comprising:

a revenue meter enclosed within an enclosure;

an I/O device physically separate from said enclosure;

[wherein the I/O device includes a processor;

wherein the I/O device is operative to provide a timer value to said revenue meter;]

an interface link operative to connect said I/O device to said revenue meter;

said I/O device further comprising a processor; said processor operative to provide at least one first timer value to said revenue meter.

[said revenue meter further comprising a processor, said processor operative to control the application of power to said I/O device.]

38. **(Twice Amended)** A method of operating a metering apparatus, comprising:

(a) measuring the delivery of electrical energy from an energy supplier to a consumer through an electric circuit using a revenue meter, said revenue meter enclosed within an enclosure;

(b) locating an I/O device external to said enclosure of said revenue meter;

(c) wherein the I/O device includes a processor; and

(d) providing at least one first timer value from the processor to said revenue meter

[(d) wherein the I/O device is operative to provide a timer value to said revenue meter;

(e) connecting an interface link between said revenue meter and said I/O device;

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(f) communicating at least one I/O signal between said I/O device and said revenue meter via said interface link; and

(g) controlling the application of power to said I/O device with a processor in said revenue meter].

46 **(Amended)** The method of claim 45 further comprising:

(f) communicating at least one communications signal from said revenue meter via [said] <u>an</u> interface link.

61. **(Amended)** The metering apparatus of claim 29, wherein [the processor communicates] <u>the revenue meter comprises a second processor, the second processor being operative to communicate</u> with said I/O device over said interface link and said <u>second</u> processor [is] <u>being</u> operative to detect errors in said communication.

63. **(Amended)** The metering apparatus of claim 29, wherein said<u>processor being</u> [I/O device further includes a microprocessor] operative to process signals and communicate at least one I/O signal.

65. **(Amended)** The metering apparatus of claim 64, wherein said <u>processor is</u> [I/O device further includes a microprocessor] operative to process signals and communicate at least one I/O signal.

72. **(Twice Amended)** A method of operating a metering apparatus, comprising:

(a) measuring the delivery of electrical energy from an energy supplier to a consumer through an electric circuit using a revenue meter, said revenue meter enclosed within an enclosure;

(b) locating an I/O device external to said enclosure of said revenue meter;

(c) wherein the I/O device includes a processor;

[(d) wherein the I/O device is operative to provide a timer value to said revenue meter;]

([e]<u>d</u>) connecting an interface link between said revenue meter and said I/O device;

([f]<u>e</u>) communicating at least one I/O signal between said I/O device and said revenue meter via said interface link; and

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[(g) controlling the application of power to said I/O device with a processor in said revenue meter.]

(f) providing at least one first timer value from the processor to said revenue meter.--